Lillie Pozer 1228397

Northern Messenger

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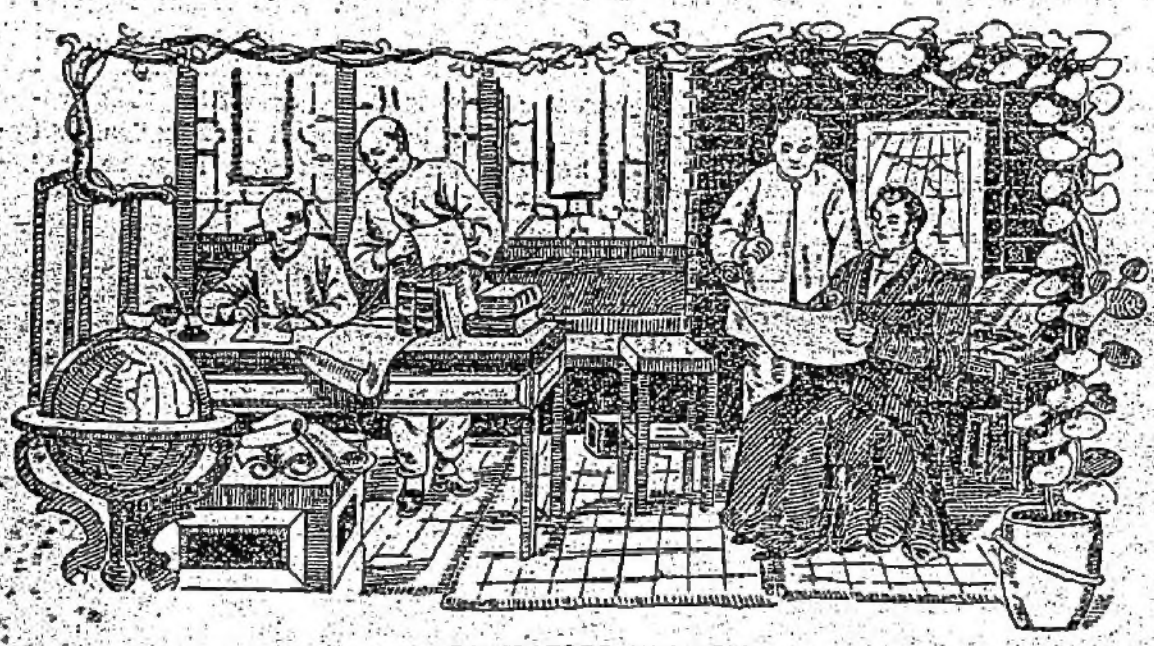
Bibles and Colporteurs.

The 'Monthly Reporter' of the British and Foreign Bible Society tells of the work of the colporteurs who carry packs of Bibles and sell them from door to door in many different lands. Here, for instance, is a little story of France, by M. Monod, who tells us not to despise the small beginnings, as a great fire may be kindled by a tiny spark. He says:—

Here is a colporteur who has been working all day long in some village, and has not succeeded in selling a single copy. When evening comes, worn out with fatigue and sad at heart, he sits down on the roadside. A farmer, coming home from the fields, enters into conversation with him, and to show his kindly feeling buys a five centimes Gospel, saying, 'It will amuse the children. Some time after he falls ill. He remembers the little book he bought; it is looked for and found. He reads it, and reads it over again. A strange sensation comes over him. . . . If Jesus is the Saviour of all men, he must be his Saviour; if He can forgive sins, He can forgive his sins. By degrees light dawns upon him. He utters timidly a prayer, and he hears the answer: 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.' He now feels another man; a new life has begun for him and for his family. The glad tidings he has received in his heart he cannot keep for himself alone. He must make them known to his friends and his neighbors. The little book is lent to one, and then to another. The curé hears of what has happened, and goes about the village warning his parishioners against this book which is being sold by the English. He is told that the little book is nothing else but the Gospel, of which many fragments are textually reproduced in the Catholic prayer book. And then the inhabitants of the village begin to think that they ought to try and find out whether what the Protestants teach is really in accordance with what is to be found in this little book. Some friends consult together and make up their minds to write to the nearest Protestant pastor and ask him to come and give them a conference about the Gospel. Meetings are held, and soon a small congregation is formed which gradually increases, till at last a pastor is called to reside among them. Thus an evangelical church comes into being. How many churches, now become numerous and living churches, have commenced in this way; and on looking back to their origin, one will find a small halfpenny Gospel, sold by a colporteur to some worthy man, who bought it merely 'to amuse his children.'

Mr. B. C. Randall, who is working as Sub-Agent in the province of Kwangtung, China, reports the following interesting experience: 'My recent trip I enjoyed very much. In several places I was invited to spend the evening with some well-to-do merchants. Only at one place was I in any way threatened; there I was followed to the boat by a large mob shouting, "Kill the foreign devil"; I did not hasten my steps, however, and the mob kept a safe distance behind me. Whether they feared to attack me, or only desired to frighten me I do not know. To remove my doubts I immediately took a number of books and Chinese Scripture calendars from the boat and returned to their midst. The shouting ceased at once, and the books and calendars sold well. It was also at Chantsun that I was called upon by one of the customs officials. He was a pleasant old gentleman, and I enjoyed the half-hour I spent with him very much. He agreed with me that if the doctrine be good and true, it is well worth his while to learn it; on the other hand, if the doctrine be worthless, the time spent in ascertaining the fact would not be very considerable, and he promised to study the books I left with him. At the same place I was visited by a merchant, who said that he had heard I was selling Christian books and had come to buy one of each kind. When I informed him that the New Testament contained not only the four Gospels, but also much more valuable reading and sound doctrine, he seemed pleased and bought a New Testament.'



TRANSLATORS AT WORK.

Dr. McGill of Korea says:—'Quite an interesting case came under my observation lately. An old man came in one Saturday and softly followed me into my dispensing room, where the patients in waiting could not hear him. He said he was a "Holy Doctrine" man. I asked him when and how he first saw the Bible. He said a man got it from a dispensary and did not want it as he could not read well; thereupon he asked for it and took it home to read. It was the Gospel by St. Mark in Chinese. He said he would like to ask me some questions about it, and, after treating my patients, I took him to my study. He referred to several passages, giving chapter and verse, and after repeating the passage asked its meaning. I am sorry I have forgotten his references. Any one could see he had read the Gospel and had been interested. He told me he had a family and had read to them and had tried to pray. He was anxious to know how to pray. And also asked about the breaking of bread. This will not be strange to you when you remember the "Tanghake" mode of worship, which is to place bread and water on a stool and bow several times to it—this being the prayer. He said he had followed this method, not knowing better. He had taught his family and friends this Holy Book, and had been ridiculed. I prayed with him and gave him a copy of the Chinese New Testament, an Irish potato, and some corn for seed, and some tracts. I asked him to our meeting on Sunday to learn more about praying, etc. He said he could not stay all day, but would come in the morning. He turned up at five a.m., just in time to get a fox I had taken the night before, sold it, and got enough money to pay expenses home, which he called God's blessing, as he had not enough before. He promised to see me when I went to his part of the country.'

A Colporteur in France

The Rev. Donald Grant, speaking of Bible translation, says: 'Now let us take up the Society's little book, "The Gospel in Many Tongues," and as we finger its pages we shall learn that the very essence of the Gospel, as it is contained in St. John iii., 16, has been translated into "more than three hundred and twenty languages and dialects." For further information let us spread out before us the Society's "Map of the World." There we have a bird's-eye view of what the Society has done. Dotted all over the map are red numbers. These indicate the lands for which the Society's translators have been at work and where the languages and dia-

The Translator.

lects they have used are spoken. North in Alaska and south in Terra del Fuego, in Norway and in Cape Colony, in Sierra Leone and Ceylon, in Australia and in numerous lesser islands of the sea these red figures meet the eye.

'Many interesting facts connected with the Society's work come to mind as the eye rests now upon one part and then another of this map, and allusion to some of them may be of interest at this point. Here, for example, is Afghanistan, which reminds us of the completion of the Pashtu version of the Scriptures and gives us the satisfaction of knowing that the Society has just given to the Afghans the whole Bible in their own tongue. Look now at the island of Madagascar. To this people the Society has recently given a reference Bible. The practice of comparing Scripture with Scripture we know to be helpful to the development of the divine life, and this habit the devout Malagasy can now cultivate to better advantage.

With the continent of Africa before us we can pause and write this sentence, 'When the Bible Society was called into existence there was not a living scrap of the Scriptures in that land. Now there are about sixty versions carrying the light into the great gloom.' An illustration of the blessed effects produced by this light is suggested to us as we read the name Uganda. Six elders of a Christian church in this land, who but a short time before were heathen, had each received from the Society in England a handsomely bound Bible. They were overjoyed at the receipt of this gift, and the letter in which they express their Christian greetings and thanks to the Society for it is most touching. From this incident we are reminded of what is a well-known fact, that the Society renders most efficient help to missionary enterprises in many lands.

'Enough, we trust, has now been said to make it plain that the Bible Society, to use Nehemiah's words, is 'doing a great work' and exerting a mighty influence on the world at large. 'Has any book,' asks Dr. Needham Cust, 'ever wrought such a marvellous effect upon nations whether in the pride of their civilization or in their unsophisticated simplicity as this book?' We would not hesitate a moment about the answer which we should give to this question, but let us remind ourselves that the changes referred to have not been wrought by the superstitious veneration of a very remarkable but hermetically sealed book, but by one whose seals have been opened, and whose contents have been made known. And when we think that the mightiest agency in the world for unsealing this book is the British and Foreign Bible Society, we must believe that the Holy Spirit, who enabled the Apostles on the day of Pentecost to speak to every man in his own tongue of the wonderful works of God, has given to the Society's translational work divine approval. Let us therefore bid Godspeed to this Society, and not only rejoice in the splendid achievements of the past but watch with deepest interest the developments of the future.'

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, Soul, despair thou never!
What though thou tread with bleeding feet
A thorny path of grief and gloom,
Thy God will choose the way most meet
To lead thee heavenwards, lead thee home.
For this life's long night of sadness
He will give thee peace and gladness;
Soul, remember in thy pains
God o'er all forever reigns.
—Zinn.

'Make It So Plain That I Can Get Hold of It.'

A TRUE STORY.

On the sixteenth day after the battle of Gettysburg I entered the room where a young wounded colonel was apparently near to death. As I entered he was roused from his stupor, and beckoned me to his bedside, and threw his feeble arms around my neck.

'O my father, how glad I am to see you. I was afraid you would not come till it was too late. I am too feeble to say much, though I have a great many things to say to you; you must do all the talking. Tell me all about dear mother and sister.'

I soon perceived by the appearance of those in the house that there was no hope entertained of his recovery. But as I could no longer endure the agony of suspense, I at last inquired of the doctor, 'Doctor, how long do you think he can live?'

'Not more than four days. He may drop away at any hour.'

'Have you or has anyone told him of his real condition?'

'No. We have left that painful duty for you to do, as we have been expecting your arrival for several days.'

As I entered the room with the dreaded message of death pressing on my heart, the eyes of my son fastened on me.

'Come, sit by my side, father. Have you been talking with the doctor about me?'

'Yes.'

'What did he tell you? Does he think I shall recover?'

There was a painful hesitation for a moment.

'Don't be afraid to tell me just what he said.'

'He told me you must die.'

'How long does he think I can live?'

'Not to exceed four days, and that you may drop away any hour.'

With great agitation he exclaimed, 'Father, is that so? Then I must die! I cannot, I must not die! O I am not prepared to die now. Do tell me how I can get ready. Make it so plain that I can get hold of it. Tell me, in a few words, if you can, so that I can see it plainly. I know you can, father, for I used to hear you explain it to others.'

'Twas no time now for tears, but for calmness and light, by which to lead the soul to Christ, and both were given.

'My son, I see you are afraid to die.'

'Yes, I am.'

'Wel, I suppose you feel guilty?'

'Yes, that is it. I have been a wicked young man. You know how it is in the army.'

'You want to be forgiven, don't you?'

'O yes, that is what I want. Can I be, father?'

'Certainly.'

'Can I know it before I die?'

'Certainly.'

'Well, now, father, make it so plain that I can get hold of it.'

At once an incident that occurred during the school days of my son came to my mind. I had not thought of it before for several years. Now it came back to me, fresh with its interest, and just what was wanted to guide the agitated heart of this young inquirer to Jesus.

'Do you remember while at school in ——, you came home one day, and I having occasion to rebuke you, you became very angry, and abused me with harsh language?'

'Yes, father, I was thinking it all over a few days ago, as I thought of your coming to see me, and felt so badly about it that I wanted to see you, and once more ask you to forgive me.'

'Do you remember how, after the paroxysm of your anger had subsided, you came in and threw your arms around my neck and said, 'My dear father, I am sorry I abused you so. It was not your loving son that did it. I was very angry. Won't you forgive me?'

'Yes, I remember it very distinctly.'

'Do you remember what I said to you as you wept on my neck?'

'Very well. You said, "I forgive you with all my heart," and kissed me. I shall never forget those words.'

'Did you believe me?'

'Certainly. I never doubted your words.'

'Did you then feel happy again?'

'Yes, perfectly; and since that time I have always loved you more than ever before. I shall never forget how it relieved me when you looked upon me so kindly, and said, 'I forgive you with all my heart.''

'Well, now, this is just the way to come to Jesus. Tell him "I am sorry," just as you told me, and ten thousand times quicker than a father's love forgave you, will He forgive you. He says He will: Then you must take His word for it, just as you did mine.'

'Why, father, is this the way to become a Christian?'

'I don't know of any other.'

'Why, father, I can get hold of this. I am so glad you have come to tell me how.'

He turned his head upon his pillow for rest. I sank into my chair and wept freely, for my heart could no longer suppress its emotions. I had done my work, and committed the case to Christ. He, too, I was soon assured, had done His. The broken heart had made its confession, had heard what it had longed for, 'I forgive you,' and believed it.

I soon felt the nervous hand on my head, and heard the word 'father' in such a tone of tenderness and joy, that I knew the change had come.

'Father, my dear father, I don't want you to weep any more, you need not. I am perfectly happy now. Jesus has forgiven me. I know He has, for He says so, and I take His word for it, just as I did yours.'

The doctor soon came in, and found him cheerful and happy, looked at him, felt his pulse, which he had been watching with intense anxiety, and said:

'Why, Colonel, you look better.'

'I am better, Doctor. I am going to get well. My father has told me how to become a Christian, and I am very happy. I believe I shall recover, for God has heard my prayer. Doctor, I want you should become a Christian, too. My father can tell you how to get hold of it.'

The Colonel still lives, a member of the Church of Christ.

I was made a better man, and better minister by that scene, where this dear son, struggling with his guilt and fear of death, was led to Jesus, and found the pardon of his sins. I there resolved never to forget that charge he made to me in his extremity: 'Make it so plain that I can get hold of it.'—'Evangelist.'

Stand Your Ground.

On the clock of history the hour for missions has sounded. Says Dr. Robert N. Cust, 'The church, the family, the individual who does not place the duty of conquering new kingdoms to the Lord in the first line of their obligations, abdicate their position.'

Brazil, which alone is larger than the whole United States, and with 16,000,000 people, has only about one missionary to every 138,000 souls.

Boys and Girls.

How He Helped the Boys.

THE STORY OF QUINTIN HOGG.

We find the following interesting sketch of Mr. Quintin Hogg, the founder of the London Polytechnic Institute, in the 'Union Gospel News' of Cleveland, Ohio :—

There is a man of wealth and character in London who has found the greatest delight of his life in helping poor boys and young men to an education of body, mind and spirit. This man is Quintin Hogg.

Mr. Hogg was brought up in a wealthy family in London, and received as boy and young man every advantage that money could buy. The world with its opportunities was before him, and there was a wide field open for the choice of a life work, a choice so momentous to any young man, and one bearing so much responsibility to a person of his talents and means.

Instead of entering one of the professions, or going into business when he left school,

QUINTIN HOGG, Esq.

he looked about him to see what he could do for the boys less fortunate than himself. As it was unnecessary for him to work for his own living, and as he appreciated that work is a necessity of life, he set about his task of helping other boys to fit themselves for the struggle.

He had a strongly religious nature, and felt that he must do something to bring the gospel first into the lives about him in the great city where there was little spiritual influence.

His first experience in religious work of any kind had been in holding a Bible class at Eton, which was attended by about half the boys in the house. After leaving Eton, in the beginning of the year 1864, he tried what he could do among the street boys of London.

Originally, his intention was to devote himself to mission work; but as he went about his district he was painfully struck with the utter absence of any possible means of innocent recreation, not to speak of instruction, for the poor, ragged children, and he determined to take up some plan by which both these needs could be supplied to them.

In a place known as Pipemakers' Alley, near Bedford-Bury, inhabited almost entirely by Irish immigrants, he found on one of his rounds that among all the houses in the court there were only two bedsteads. The people were sleeping on bundles of rags and straw, old brandy cases and the like being used for tables and chairs.

Having never before been brought into actual contact with real poverty and want, he was greatly aroused by the misery which he saw, and felt that his life depended upon doing something to help the wretched little boys running about the streets.

His first effort was to get a couple of crossing sweepers, whom he picked up near Trafalgar square, and offer to teach them to read. Under one of the Adelphi Arches on the banks of the Thames, with two Bibles for reading books, and a tallow candle in an empty beer bottle for illumination, was then started what in the course of a few years became the great Polytechnic Institute of London.

This first lesson had not progressed very far when a policeman appeared with his light at the end of the arch, and the boys disappeared in a twinkling, leaving the dazed teacher alone in the dark to meet the officer. The latter scrutinized him a moment by the light of his bull's eye, but concluded that there was no cause for arrest, and moved on.

Mr. Hogg thought his first essay rather unsuccessful, but was not discouraged by one failure. He determined to learn the language of the street gamin, and to ascertain their ways of life and real wants by getting down to them himself.

He went down to the New Cut, on the south side of the river, and bought a second-hand shoe-black's suit, a box with a strap to go over the shoulder, brushes, and all the necessary fittings. Disguised in this costume he went out two or three nights each week for about six months, blacking boots and sleeping out with the boys on barges, under tarpaulins, or in the so-called 'Punches Hole,' on a ledge of the Adelphi Arches, and elsewhere.

Mr. Hogg's father knew nothing about all this, and sometimes when the young man found these holes positively too bad to stay in on account of vermin, he would roll himself in a blanket and sleep on a table in the mission room.

His real object was to learn how the boys lived, what they ate, how much it cost them, and how they could best be reached. Sometimes he would go around Covent Garden Market and hold horses, or do any odd jobs which he saw other boys doing. No one can learn so much about a boy as his companions can.

The following winter the Ragged School began in real earnest, at first only as a day school. Mr. Hogg had rented, for the sum of twelve pounds a year, a room in Of Alley, off the Strand, which was used for a mission. Here he placed a very earnest woman in charge of the classes, and very soon she begged him to open the room on the evenings when it was not required for mission purposes, for the use of classes for the older boys.

Mr. Hogg did not feel called upon for this kind of work; however, he told the good woman that she might have the use of the room and the gas, but that she must undertake to keep the boys in order herself, as he could not promise any assistance in that line.

On the following Monday the evening school was opened. Mr. Hogg was ill in bed at home, when suddenly, about eight o'clock, the doorbell rang and a boy was ushered in. It was one of the older lads, living near the mission, who had come to beg Mr. Hogg to go down to the school at once. There was a fight among the boys, and the police interfering were being resisted and pelted with slates, etc.

Mr. Hogg scrambled into some clothes, and slipping on an overcoat as he ran through the hall, made all haste to the Ragged School. Arrived there, he found the whole school in an uproar. The boys had wrenched off the gas fixtures, and some were using them to strike the police, while others were defending themselves with slates; a large concourse of people were standing around, either looking on to see the fun, or helping in the fray.

Thinking first of the teacher, and being alarmed for her safety, Mr. Hogg ran into the darkened room, filled with struggling men and boys, and called to them to stop instantly and be quiet. To his amazement the riot was immediately quelled, and then he found out for the first time in his life that he had some kind of an instinct or faculty for the management of the older boys. The boys loved him because he loved them and showed that he did.

From that day for three years he scarcely missed the Ragged School for a single night. The class prospered wonderfully. The little room, which was only thirty feet long by twelve feet wide, soon became too small to accommodate the numbers who wished to attend, and the school had to be divided into two sections of sixty each, one coming from seven o'clock to 8.30, and the other from 8.30 to ten o'clock.

There Mr. Hogg sat between two classes, perched on the back of a form, eating his 'pint of thick and two doorsteps,' as the boys called coffee and bread and treacle, and taking one division at reading, and the oth-

er at writing or arithmetic. Each section closed with a ten-minute service and prayer, so that the spiritual element was never lacking in the instruction of the boys.

Very soon the character and appearance of the boys in the school came to be very different from what it was at first. Some of them had come almost naked, except for their mothers' shawls which were pinned around them; and there were five separate gangs of thieves in attendance, all of whom, in the course of six months, were earning a more or less respectable livelihood.

Many of the shoeblacks were apprenticed to various trades, and these brought their fellow-mechanics to the school, so that in the course of three or four years the really ragged and unkempt boys were changed into orderly and fairly-dressed lads.

In the meantime the premises of the school had been enlarged, first by a single room, and later by the rental of the adjoining house, which was converted into a sort of dormitory for the boys who had no homes. This house was in very bad condition when they took it up, but Mr. Hogg and the boys went to work with their own hands as amateur painters, carpenters and whitewashers, and soon had a quite respectable and homelike place.

In 1869 a master had become necessary, and the school was moved into still larger and more comfortable and commodious quarters in Castle street. Here they had a fine dormitory, capable of holding forty boys, and Mr. Hogg had a small room partitioned off where sometimes he and sometimes the master slept, it being a part of their office to see that the boys started off for work at the proper time in the morning. All this time religious services were carried on in connection with the mission, both in the old quarters and the new.

In 1871-so many respectable young fellows had taken to coming to the night school that Mr. Hogg suggested to them that they form an institute which should be carried on in a house in Hanover street, while the Ragged School should be held as before in the Castle street premises. Thirty-five boys joined immediately, and for years afterwards did considerable of the teaching in the Ragged School.

The institute throve amazingly, the little house being packed every night, and in 1878 they moved once more into larger quarters in Long Acre, where they could accommodate 300, and here classes of a more ambitious nature were started, taking up science and art.

By this time the idea was firmly fixed in Mr. Hogg's mind that there was no existing institute which was sufficiently catholic in its aims and tastes. There were institutions which were religious solely, or educational only, or simply athletic clubs, but what he wanted to develop was one which should recognize and teach that God has given man more than one side to his character, and where any reasonable taste could be gratified, whether spiritual, intellectual, social or athletic.

In 1881 he bought the old Royal Polytechnic Institution, and in September, 1882, opened the new London Polytechnic Institute. On the first night of registration over 1,000 young fellows were enrolled, and Mr. Hogg worked at this from five o'clock in the evening until one in the morning, as he made it his duty to see personally every member who was received.

He had designed the place for 2,000 members, but during the very first winter the membership reached 6,800, and has now increased to 15,000. Mr. Hogg declares that the secret of the success underlying all the work of the institute is in the 'Poly' motto: 'The Lord is our strength.'

The president and founder himself has left the impress of his strong, wholesome life on thousands of London young men. He has won their hearts, and by this means leads them where he will.

Thanksgiving.

Our barns are filled with food for man and beast,
Our cellars with earth's fruitage running o'er,
Tokens to man that 'good will' has not ceased,
But lives and shines through all this bounteous store.

We read of famine's reign on distant shores,
Its chilling penury and gnawing pain,
While, to supply our wants, abundance pours
Her teeming riches from the fertile plain.

Peace, blessed peace, smiles on our happy land;
No foreign foe plans to invade our shores;
At home no trait'rous, vile intrigue is fanned
To kindle civil strife around our doors.

Though nations have been scourged by dread disease,
And winds have wafted death upon their wings,
While heathen tribes, their idols to appease,
Have perpetrated most revolting things;

Yet, Thou, O God of life, hast kept secure,
Year after year, our land from pestilence.
The atmosphere which fans our homes, so pure,
Would quickly drive the lurking plagues, far hence.

We live within a land of liberty.
No slave his galling fetters here bemoans,
No cruel monster's lash allowed to be
The fertile source of agonizing groans.

The law protects alike the weak and strong;
Its justice legislates for every man;
The weakest child, the victim of a wrong,
Can shelter find beneath its righteous plan.

And not for civil liberty alone,
We praise Thy name, O giver of all good,
Nor for the fact that warfare is unknown,
Or that our table teems with choicest food.

Blest boon to weary pilgrims of a day,
To worship Thee, the everlasting God—
The heart is chilled and stilled when we survey
The blood that cries to heaven from the sod;

From out the martyr's grave, the stony street,
The winding, deep ravine, the rocky hill,
Where God's own faithful flock have had to meet
The wrath of demons who did shout, 'Kill! kill!'

How blest the liberty we here enjoy,
Of daily coming to a throne of grace.
With none who dare to hinder or annoy,
We, 'neath our 'vine and fig tree' seek Thy face.

We thank Thee for Thy Son who died, to save
Poor, fallen man from never-ending woe,
That all who trust a present help may have,
To stay and strengthen, as through life they go.

We thank Thee for the grand old British flag,
A herald of God's love to heathen man;
We thank Thee for Thy servants, who ne'er lag
To teach those heathen God's redemptive plan.

We thank Thee for the tie of love between
Our country and the dear old mother land;
We thank Thee for our worthy, aged Queen,
A queen of queens, beloved on every hand.

And all the good and great in every land,
The stay of nations, principles divine,
All who go forth to work at Thy command—
Each lofty impulse truly is but thine.

We thank Thee for our sorrows. Hard may seem
The effort to be thankful 'neath the cloud
Thou knowest best. Teach us, O Lord, to beam
With love and praise when darkness may enshroud.

Knowing that soon the clouds will sunder part;
The sun the brighter shine when breaks the gloom.
Thus may we ever learn how good Thou art,
And that this world is not our lasting home.

WILLIAM MUNRO.

Alice's 'Daisies.'

(By Lizzie Young Butler.)

'Going out, daughter?' inquired Mrs. Thorne, looking up surprised from the sheet she was hemming.

'Why, yes, mother; don't you remember? the committee on decorations for the church concert meets this afternoon;' and Alice Thorne hastily drew on her glove.

'Indeed I had forgotten it, but now that you speak of it I recall the fact. I'm sorry,' added she, dropping her work, 'for Aunt Kezie wanted you to do a litle writing for her, but to-night will doubtless do as well—'

'But I told Nellie Hatch I'd go around to her house to-night, mother,' interrupted Alice, a slight flush rising to her cheeks. 'Just a few of us girls, to play Chautauqua games.'

'It's too bad, Alice. I fear Aunt Kezie will be very much disappointed,' said Mrs. Thorne with a little sigh.

'But you see how it is, mother?' said Alice, moving slowly towards the door.

'Yes, I see, but please try and make no engagements for to-morrow. You are sadly neglecting some of your home duties lately, dear, and some day I feel sure you will regret it. However, on your way just step in to Mrs. Amory's and leave this pattern.'

'Yes, indeed;' and Alice hurriedly kissed her mother good-bye and ran lightly down the steps.

'I can't imagine what has come over Alice lately,' said Mrs. Thorne to Aunt Kezie after explaining why Alice had gone out. 'Once she was so eager to do everything possible about home; sought for opportunities to help me and was always ready to do whatever I asked; but for several months she has been so much engrossed in outside affairs—missionary endeavors and church duties—that I have been able to get her help but little.' Mrs. Thorne straightened the stool under Aunt Kezie's feet to hide the emotion in her face, but her voice betrayed her.

'Don't worry about Alice, Gertrude, her heart is all right, I feel sure. These affairs in which she is so much and so rightly interested are well; the child only makes the mistake of many an older one in giving time

belonging to home to these outside duties. The dear child will see it so before long, I believe ;' and Aunt Kezie smiled confidently into the troubled face beside her.

In the meantime Alice, not a little disturbed, walked briskly down the street towards Mrs. Amory's. 'Not going?' exclaimed she, finding Mary busily stitching at the machine.

'Really, I cannot, Alice,' answered Mary, stopping the incessant click-clack for a moment. 'Mother is simply swamped in work, and I tell her the only rescue is for me to drag her out, and there's some sewing which must be finished this afternoon, but I can help Saturday, I think. Good-bye.'

As Alice turned thoughtfully from the Amorys' door, again her mind reverted to her mother's words and to the overflowing work-basket she had left by her mother's side.

'Evidently Mary thinks her place is at home to-day,' and more perturbed than ever she hastened to the conservatory, where she was to meet her friends.

There Alice joined them, forgetting for a little her mother's parting words in the loveliness about her and in her eager talk with her mates; but inquiries for Mary once more brought uppermost in her mind the words which had followed her from her own door:

'O girls!' exclaimed she, pausing near a pot of double white primrose, 'isn't it pretty and doesn't it look like popcorn? It's Aunt Kezie's favorite plant.'

Her mother and the two boys were just sitting down to tea when Alice entered the dining-room.

'Where's Aunt Kezie?' inquired she, passing by her mother on the way to her place.

'She is very tired and not quite well, I think, so concluded not to come to tea,' said Mrs. Thorne, concisely. 'I shall carry her some hot drink after supper is served.'

'Oh, let me! do, mother,' urged Alice, hurrying to the kitchen after receiving an approving smile from her mother.

As she laid the Japanese tray with a dainty white cloth, toasted the bread a delicate brown, brewed the tea and placed a tempting slice of fowl on her own china plate, Alice's heart beat quickly. Aunt Kezie tired and not quite well! How the words throbbed themselves over and over in her brain! Dear Aunt Kezie, so patient and sweet, always doing for others' comfort—for her to be tired meant a great deal. Then, like a flash, came the thought of what home would be with her chair empty (for Aunt Kezie was always an invalid), and, with a sudden contraction of the throat and blurred eyes, she picked a cluster of geranium and a bit of ageratum, placed them in her tiny vase for the tray, and went towards Aunt Kezie's room.

After the evening lamp had been lighted and her mother, with a late magazine near, had been seated in a comfortable chair before the open fire, she said:

'I'm going out just a few moments, mother, dear, and please,' with a lingering caress, 'if you have any regard for my feelings, don't touch that basket of work while I am gone;' and slipping into her jacket she walked briskly down the street, her mother's smile warm in her heart. The conservatory was soon reached and with the pot of white primrose, which had attracted her in the afternoon, tucked safely under her arm she hurried on to Nellie Hatch's home.

'I'm very sorry, girls,' explained she to her friends of the afternoon, who were already at Nellie's, awaiting her coming. 'I'd like ever so much to stay with you, but some way I've had a new thought come to me since I parted from you at the church door. The Chautauqua games are instructive, interesting, and all that, and right to play, but to-night I feel as though I just must stay with Aunt Kezie. Do you know, girls, for the last month I have scarcely sat with her at all, I've been so taken up with other things;' and Alice dashed the tears from her eyes with her hand. 'Besides, I've left mother to do almost everything at home and'—quickly—'I'm ashamed of myself, really I am. And, too, you know I do not have a very large allowance, so the plant I thought of contributing must go somewhere else. Of course, those of you who have more than I have can do more, but I do not feel that it would be just right for me to spend my money so. Good-bye, girls, and—do not think that I've withdrawn entirely from the concert plans. What time I can conscientiously spend away from home I'll be more than glad to help;' and Alice, nodding brightly, closed the door.

'Well,' said Nellie, 'I guess Alice is in the right.'

'That's so; for though what we have been doing is perfectly right, it would certainly be more in keeping with the spirit of the concert if I, for instance, had sacrificed some of my natural repugnance to stocking darning and other homely duties, and stayed at home like a good girl and helped my dear old mother. Good-bye, girls; I'll see you some other time. Strange as it may seem, games, just now, have lost their fascination for me while mother's mending basket stares me in the face.'

And so, with the exception of two, the girls went homeward, intent on picking up some of the dropped stitches which they were not slow to discover.

Aunt Kezie's room never looked more inviting to Alice than when she stepped over the threshold with the nodding plant in her hand. 'I have not forgotten your likings, Aunt Kezie,' said Alice, kissing the face turned towards her.

'I see you have not, my dear child. Thank you very much. How very pretty it is! It will brighten up Aunt Kezie's room wonderfully,' said she, looking over the pretty blooms into Alice's happy face. 'I thought you were going over to Nellie's to-night?' added she, noticing the mother's mending bag in Alice's hand.

'So I was, but I found I much preferred to spend the evening with you. Of course, you do not object to the prosaic work I have brought with me.'

'By no means, dear. Such work carries with it the poetry of home happiness,' said Aunt Kezie in a satisfied tone.

On the hassock by Aunt Kezie's side Alice, as she weaved the thread in and out of the rents in the boys' socks, chatted away of all the bright, pleasant bits which she had stored up for this special member of the family, led from one subject to another by Aunt Kezie's interested questions or remarks. A lull in the conversation proved a thoughtful pause to the young girl longing to do right and puzzling her brains over several things which had that day come to her.

'Aunt Kezie,' said she meditatively, 'why is it that so often when we are doing what we think is the best that some sudden development of circumstances shows us that we are making a great mistake?'

'My dear,' said Aunt Kezie, passing her hand caressingly over the brown head resting against her knee, '"duties never conflict" is an old saying, but as true as it is old'—

'I know,' interrupted Alice eagerly, lifting her head; 'then why do they so often seem to conflict?'

'Ah, my dear, older heads than yours have puzzled over that very question and worn their hearts out with disappointment because they failed to answer it; and yet there is an answer.' Aunt Kezie's voice was low and wistful. 'My girlie,' said she, laying her hand over her niece's restless fingers, 'Aunt Kezie would have you while young learn the lesson of dividing your time to such purpose that home and church and pleasure would each hold its own place and no one encroach on the other. Home comes first; but home duties can usually be so apportioned that there will be opportunities for church work right along beside them; and, too, dear, is it not often the case that what at first seems a duty when closely scanned proves not to be so, even though it wear a tempting guise?' Aunt Kezie paused with a winning smile, but Alice's pressure of her hand and almost inaudible though urgent 'don't stop' caused her to add:

'I remember when I was a girl my mother used to say to me when I was inclined to shirk my home work for the sake of doing something outside which looked particularly alluring, "Kezie, my child, never trample on daisises in a wild chase for roses."'

'And is that the reason, dear Aunt Kezie, why you always have the comfort and happiness of those about you first in your mind?' asked Alice, thinking remorsefully of the daisies, in the shape of home opportunities, which she had lately crushed beneath her feet.

'Perhaps so, dearie; at any rate, I have had reason to well remember and act upon my mother's words, for like yourself, when younger, work away from home ever looked fascinating if it did not always prove satisfying. You have lately entirely ignored home calls, dear, in your enthusiasm over your other affairs which are right in their place. It seems to me that a systematic divison of your time would have enabled you to perform all home duties, and help abroad as well. Do you see it, dear?'

'Yes, I see, Aunt Kezie. I always do see things plainer when I talk them over with you. I shall be all ready to do your writing to-morrow, if you are rested and well;' and Alice bustled around the dainty room, getting Aunt Kezie ready for the night.

'Good night, Aunt Kezie, and thank you ever so much,' said she, kissing the face looking up at her from the pillow; and then she tripped downstairs and finished out the evening helping the boys with their morrow's lessons.

When the next afternoon Alice drew her chair up to the oak desk in Aunt Kezie's room, pretty cards and beautiful tokens of the season lay on the lid, and Alice was soon busily writing off names and dainty little notes, for Aunt Kezie believed in sending a personal line with the gifts to friends in hospital or city or at the homes.

'If Saturday is a fine day, I'd like to drive to the hospital with some flowers, and I want you to go with me, Alice, dear,' said Aunt Kezie as the last envelope was directed. 'And these cards,' holding up some from which dangled pretty pink ribbon, 'I want tied on the bouquets.'

'O Aunt Kezie, I'd love dearly to go—but'—with unusual thoughtfulness and self-denial—'I think mother would like to go;' and a little flush crept over her face.

'Yes, so she would, I've no doubt, dear, and it was lovely in you to suggest it. I'm glad you thought of it;' and so was Alice when she saw how rested and bright looked her mother's face when she returned from her drive the next Saturday. Tea was all ready, and they sat together about the table with happy hearts; but no one was gladder or more contented than a certain young lady.

who brought Aunt Kezie's toast from the Thorne kitchen.

Later, as ready dressed for her evening with the decorating committee, she went in to bid Aunt Kezie good-night she said laughingly:

'I think I've not overlooked a daisy today, dear Aunt Kezie.'

'I don't believe you've trampled on one, dear, and I'm sure you find them very satisfactory little flowers.'

'Indeed they are!' emphasizing each word. Then looking around the jamb of the door with a twinkle of merriment, she added: 'And for that very reason the roses will prove all the sweeter.'—'Wellspring.'

How Many Bones.

How many bones in the human face?
Fourteen when they are all in place.

How many bones in the human head?
Eight, my child, as I've often said.

How many bones in the human ear?
Three in each, and help to hear.

How many bones in the human spine?
Twenty-six, like a climbing vine.

How many bones in the human chest?
Twenty-four ribs, and two of the rest.

How many bones in the shoulder bind?
Two in each—one before and behind.

How many bones in the human arm?
In each one, two in each forearm.

How many bones in the human wrist?
Eight in each, if none are missed.

How many bones in the palm of the hand?
Five in each, with many a band.

How many bones in the fingers ten?
Twenty-eight, and by joints they bend.

How many bones in the human hip?
One in each, like a dish they dip.

How many bones in the human thigh?
One in each, and deep they lie.

How many bones in the human knees?
One in each, the knee pan, please.

How many bones in the ankle strong?
Seven in each, but none are long.

How many bones in the ball of the foot?
Five in each, as the palms were put.

How many bones in the toes half a score?
Twenty-eight, and there are no more.

And altogether, these many bones fix,
And then count in the body two hundred and six.

And then we have the human mouth,
Of upper and under thirty-two teeth.

And now and then have a bone, I should think,
That was in a joint, or to fill up a chink.

A sesamoid bone, or a wormian, we call.
And now we may rest, for we've told them all.
—'Medical Recorder.'

Where Two Ways Meet.

Where two ways meet the children stand,
A broad, fair road on either hand;
One leads to Right and one to Wrong;
So runs the song.

Which will you choose, each lass and lad?
The right or left, the good or bad?
One leads to Right and one to Wrong;
So runs the song.
—'Sunshine.'

The Mill Boy That Became a Missionary.

Many years ago Thomas Crosby, a Canadian youth, read an appeal from a missionary in British Columbia for more workers. The youth had lately become a Christian, his heart was full of zeal, and here was just the work for him; so he regarded the request as personal.

He was employed in a bark mill. As soon as he could leave his employer he started for home, some distance away. Travelling on foot, he did not reach his father's house until near midnight.

Mr. Crosby, surprised that his son should come home, and at such a late hour, asked, as soon as the door was opened, what had sent him away from his business. Without entering, Thomas told his story, and listened to his father's objections. Thus, for several minutes, did the son, standing on the doorstep, his father within, plead his cause, and answer the objections presented. A part of the conversation, as told the writer, will give an idea of the discussion.

'You are too young to be a missionary. You are not a man yet,' objected Mr. Crosby.

'I will be soon. I am growing older and larger every day,' replied Thomas.

'How can you preach? You do not know how. You have never studied such matters, nor have you had more than a common school education.'

'I can study and learn. Yet I know how to tell men that they are sinners, and that they need a Saviour; and can tell how I found Him. I will tell what He has done for me.'

'British Columbia is many thousand miles away, and it takes money to get there. You have no money, nor have I any to spare. Where will you get money to take you to that mission field?'

'I will borrow it.'

'From whom?'

'Mr. ——' (a noted and careful money-lender).

'He will not let you have it without the best of security. And who will endorse your note? He is very careful, and does not lose a dollar if he can help it. He would not accept me, if I were ready to sign your note.'

'I'll try him, anyway. He cannot do more than refuse; but I believe he'll let me have the money.'

'I don't. Yet, even if able to get the money, will you go away and desert your parents? Remember that you are our only child, and the time is near when we may be dependent on you for support. What shall we do if you leave us? Is it right to turn away from your parents in their old age?'

Before the youth could think of a reply, his mother, who had listened at the open window in the room above, called out earnestly: 'You can go, Tom!' Tom, you can go if you want to.'

Soon after, the mother, father and son were talking and praying in the little sitting-room, and seeking to know what the Lord would have them do. Most of the remainder of the night was spent in earnest consultation and prayer. But the matter was settled when morning came.

When the youth called on the money-lender, told his story, and asked for the loan of two hundred dollars, he was answered with the sharp inquiry, 'What security will you give?'

'These,' replied young Crosby, holding up his hands with the open palms toward the man. 'I will work day and night, after reaching the place, and will pay back every dollar with interest.'

The lender may not have known exactly why he did it, but he accepted the youth's unendorsed note for two hundred dollars, and gave him the money.

The young missionary made few preparations, and speedily started for his field of labor. Reaching British Columbia, he found employment at good wages in a saw-mill. When two hundred dollars were earned, and enough more for interest on the money, the whole was sent back to Canada to pay off the note. Not until then did young Crosby feel that he had any right to turn to his chosen work.

Calling on the missionary who had written the letter, the youth was admitted, and then, in his blunt way, he made himself and his purpose known. Said he, 'I've come now to see about that mission work.'

'What mission work?' inquired the missionary.

'That work that you wrote about.'

'Wrote about to whom?'

'Why, you wrote a letter to me, saying that you wanted men to help, and I am here to do what I can.'

'Wrote you? Why, I never wrote a word to you.'

'Yes, you did.'

'I never did. How could I? I never heard of you before to-day.'

'That may be; but you wrote for me, and here I am.'

'I never wrote you a word, nor even heard that such a person lived; so I could not have written.'

'You may see for yourself. I brought the letter along; I've got it with me now. There; didn't you write that letter?' inquired Crosby, handing the letter, now showing marks of age and use.

'Yes; I wrote that letter, but not to you. It's printed.'

'But you wrote to any one ready to come here to help you in the Lord's work. That meant me; and here I am.'

'That letter was written long ago. You have taken a long time in coming. Why didn't you come before?'

'I could not. I had to earn the money first to pay my way. That's all settled now; I came as soon as I could, and am ready now to help.'

'What can you do?'

'What do you want me to do?'

'Put on your hat and come along with me.'

Saying this, the missionary, pleased with the peculiar ways of the honest, earnest youth, led him out and showed him some of the work. From that day Thomas Crosby was a missionary. Six months afterward he was licensed as an exhorter, and a year later was a regular preacher in the Methodist Church in British Columbia.

This was after the discovery of gold; and rough, godless miners had come in multitudes to British Columbia. Some of them had brought Indian women from the north. These women were able to speak a little English, and understood more; and to them the young missionary turned his thoughts, prayers and efforts. Some listened, became interested, and became, if not Christians, at least inquirers. Convinced that theirs was an evil life, they proposed to return to their home; but the miners hindered and forbade the young missionary to preach or speak to them about religion. To emphasize their commands, they said that they would kill him if he disobeyed.

Young Crosby was not a coward, though he loved life as much as others. But he loved Jesus and souls more, and he persisted in trying to lead the women to the Saviour.

The poor creatures, seeing his devotion, were the more ready to listen and heed.

When the miners saw the courage of the young preacher, instead of carrying out their threat, they allowed such of the women as wished to return to their distant home, and let the missionary continue his work.

Reaching home, the women told their fathers and mothers, not of the evil, but of the good, they had learned in the camp of the miners, and told of the good man with the 'wonderful book.' The story was repeated so often that the men became interested in the brave preacher, and in his 'wonderful book,' and resolved to go after him and invite him to make them a visit, and tell them what he had told their daughters and sisters.

Cutting down immense trees, the Indians made a great canoe, capable of carrying sixty men, and in it sailed six hundred miles down the coast after the white preacher and his book. Though they found Crosby, they failed at first to persuade him to go along. Indian-like, they would not accept a refusal. The missionary listened to their appeal, and finally consented to accompany them.

He found a deepening religious interest among the Indians, and many ready, even anxious, to hear the Gospel and accept Christ. He worked ceaselessly and successfully to bring souls to the Saviour. People came from long distance to hear the white man preach and read from his 'wonderful book.'

The news spread into Alaska, and Indians from America's new possession came down to learn what had moved their neighbors so greatly. At first they looked on with ridicule, then with amazement, and finally with deep interest. Not content selfishly by themselves to know and hear the white man and his book, they returned to tell the news to their friends and relatives.

A delegation was sent back to the British possessions to bring Crosby into Alaska, to tell the Indians there what he was telling their neighbors farther south. The appeals at first were vain, for the young missionary was too much interested in the work in progress to undertake anything new. Yet he could not turn away the urgent request, and he went.

In Alaska Thomas Crosby found a work of grace already begun. Men were not only eager to hear the truth; they wanted to know how to be saved, how to get rid of the sin burdening their souls. It was joyful work to the young man, and his success encouraged him so much that he felt it necessary to have help. Nor could he forget those whom he had recently left, to whom he had promised soon to return.

'You must remain with us, and be our permanent teacher,' said the Alaskans.

'I cannot,' responded Crosby. 'I promised to return soon, and I must keep my word. Besides, this country belongs to the United States; I belong to Great Britain, and my work is in her possessions.'

'But you must not leave us without a teacher,' urged the Alaskans.

Thinking first of his own denomination, Crosby wrote to the Methodist Episcopal Mission Society in New York, telling of the work, and asking for men and money to carry it on. To his sorrow, the reply came that neither men nor money could be spared from the great work already burdening the Methodist Church.

The missionary then wrote to the mission board of the Presbyterian Church in the North, and the result was the establishment of Presbyterian missions in Alaska. Of the success of that mission work nothing need be told here. It is enough to say that the work begun by Thomas Crosby is going on, ever prosperous, even amid trials and difficulties.

Let it not be forgotten that this Presbyterian mission was begun by a Methodist, and a Canadian. And when he started as a missionary he was simply a poor working youth, employed first in a tanbark mill, later in a sawmill. Though he had only a common-school education, he was not afraid to undertake, and he was successful in accomplishing a most difficult work. But then, he studied hard, did his very best, and all for Christ and the Church.—Rev. J. A. Davis, in the 'Golden Rule.'

Rain-Music.

The clouds are gently floating
Across a sky of gray;
Where can the sun be hiding
His happy face to-day?
Yet wherefore should we murmur,
When over field and plain
There softly falls the music
Of the rain?

'The God of mercy sends us,
Who doeth all things right,'
'Tis thus methinks are singing
The drops so silver-bright;
'He knows when we are needed
In valley, wood and lane;
'Tis He who wakes the music
Of the rain.

'Our drops are very tiny,
Yet each must do its part;
And each may cheer and strengthen
A floweret's fainting heart.
We steal among the grasses,
We help the growing grain;
Earth smiles to list the music
Of the rain.

'And joining all together,
The mountain streams we swell;
We wing the mighty torrent,
And fill the way-side well.
We know, since God hath sent us,
Our service is not vain;
So praise shall tune the music
Of the rain.'

Then since the pearly raindrops
Can all so useful be,
Some helpful work is waiting,
Be sure for you and me!
This message we'll remember,
When on our window-pane
We hearken to the music
Of the rain.

—'Sunday Hour.'

John Hanson's Night Work.

John Hanson was a bluff boy of fifteen. He was a smart, active, fearless fellow; the boys thought a good deal of him, and he thought a good deal of himself. On one occasion his father had business which called him to a distant city, and he left John to 'take care' of the family. John felt very proud of his trust, and did well for several days, acting under the advice and counsel of his mother, just as he ought to have done. By-and-by he grew impatient of his mother's restraint, and did many things quite independent of her. The younger children did not like his doings and sayings at all. 'He orders us round,' they said, 'as if he were king.' At last he took the entire management of things, and one day acted not only against his mother's wishes but talked very ill-temperedly to her. Going to bed that night, he could not sleep. His conduct towards his mother troubled him, and he tossed from one side of the bed to the other, trying to get an easy place. He blamed the bed and Bridget who made it, and then he thought he was sick, and worried along for some time; in fact, John suspected what the matter really was, only he was too proud to own it. He knew it was his treatment of his mother that troubled him; and for a long while he tried to sleep it off, or think of something else, or excuse himself in one way or another. Happily John did not succeed. Conscience would do its work, and John listened to all it said, and the consequence was that pretty near midnight, for it was as late as that, the boy got up, stole to his mother's chamber, and, with tears in his eyes, begged her to forgive him. 'And oh,' he says, now that he is a man, 'it was the sweetest moment of my life when I was forgiven.'

That hour was the turning point in the boy's life. If he that night had hardened himself, the next day he would probably behave worse than before, and so on, until the bad boy had become the bad man. But John yielded to the voice of conscience, and he made thorough work of it. He confessed his fault and asked to be forgiven, and experienced the sweets, they are real sweets, of forgiveness. The next day John's management was improved. He was more kind and considerate towards his brothers and sisters, and respectful towards his mother; and he was prepared by it afterwards to taste the sweets of God's forgiveness and favor. And his word to every boy now is, 'If you have wronged your mother, be sure to own your fault, and ask to be forgiven. Harden not your hearts, boys.'—'Sunday Hour.'

Opportunities.

In one of the Greek cities there stood, long ago, a statue. Every trace of it has vanished now, as is the case with most of those old masterpieces of genius; but there is still in existence an epigram which gives us an excellent description of it, and as we read the words we can discover the lesson which those wise old Greeks meant that the statue should teach to every passer-by.

The epigram is in the form of a conversation between a traveller and the statue.

'What is thy name, O statue?'

'I am called Opportunity.'

'Who made thee?'

'Lysippus.'

'Why art thou standing on thy toes?'

'To show that I stay but a moment.'

'Why hast wings on thy feet?'

'To show how quickly I pass by.'

'But why is thy hair so long on thy forehead?'

'That men may seize me when they meet me.'

'Why, then, is thy head so bald behind?'

'To show that when I have once passed, I cannot be caught.'

We do not see statues standing on the highways to remind us of our opportunities for doing good and being of service to others, but we know that they come to us. They are ours but for a moment. If we let them pass, they are gone forever.—'Waif.'

Stop Groaning.

The man who frets at worldly strife
Grows sallow, sour, and thin;
Give us the lad whose happy life
Is one perpetual grin.
He, Midas-like, turns all to gold,
He smiles when others sigh,
Enjoys alike the hot and cold,
And laughs through wet and dry.

—'Waif.'

Little Folks.

Fiddle and I.

You wouldn't think that the playing of a violin could make a man a teetotaller for the rest of his life, would you? Yet it was so.

I had been laid aside by grievous sickness, and was just getting convalescent and able to get a breath of air at the cottage door, watching the folks go by, when there came along a little boy playing the violin. Seeing me sitting in the doorway he stopped, tuned up, and played to entertain me. I, always being fond of music, and extra pleased for a bit of amusement to-day, received him gladly. He was a nice-looking little boy, well-dressed an' comely, an' when he had finished playing his tune, 'The Last Rose of Summer,' I said:

'Little boy, you don't look as if you were playing for a living; your clothes are good and you are well shod. Why do you wander about the streets like this?'

The little boy smiled.

'I am not playing for a living, old man,' he replied; 'but I'm a Temperance boy, and we've come down to the sea-side for a spring holiday, and mother gave me leave to see what Fiddle and I could earn for our Band of Hope in Manchester.'

Well, you may be sure I thought him a brave little lad to give his services like that in the cause of

Temperance. I didn't dare to own to him that I was overfond of the drink myself, but I asked him politely if he would play me another tune. He readily consented, and what do you think he played? Why, nothing else but that well-known hymn of my childhood:

'Sowing the seeds of a lingering pain,
Sowing the seeds of a maddened brain,
Sowing the seeds of a tarnished name—
Oh! what shall the harvest be?'

The hot tears rolled down my cheeks.

'Why, we used to sing that at my old home!' I cried; 'and the minister often said to us: "Sow a habit—reap a character; sow a character—reap a destiny." Yes, an' I shall never forget it, little boy,' I continued. 'We sow tares an' we reap tares; we sow wild oats an' we reap wild oats. I have sown both, an' it has brought me a "maddened brain" and a "tarnished name." It takes longer to reap than it does to sow.'

I wept in silence.

'Why don't you sign the pledge, old man?' asked the little boy presently; 'I've some cards in my fiddle-case.'

'Ah! little boy,' I answered, 'I fear it is too late.'

'Never too late to mend, old man,' he replied, in his quaint, old-fashioned way.

I looked at him again and said:

'Who cares whether I mend or no?'

'Fiddle and I,' he answered, smiling.

I don't know how it was, but the boy's answer pleased me, and I thought that at any rate someone cared about me.

'I'll sign the pledge, little boy,' I said, 'for the sake of Fiddle and I.'

You may be sure my little friend was very pleased, especially when, in addition to signing, I gave him sixpence towards his Manchester Band of Hope.

And when my wife came home I said:

'Jenny, I've signed the pledge.'

'Fiddlesticks!' she replied.

'It isn't fiddlesticks,' I said, 'but it was done because of Fiddle and I!'—'Adviser.'

Little Ping-An.

A story from China.

Ping-an was a little girl in one of our mission schools in North China. Her name means 'Peace,' but she was a very merry, lively little woman. She used to wear her black hair braided into a long, heavy plait that hung down her back, and was bound at the end with a scarlet cord. Just behind her ear, she used to often fasten a bright-colored flower.

The dress she wore was a sort of blue cotton tunic, fastened at the side, and it was trimmed with braid of many colors, red, and green, and yellow.

Then she had blue cotton trousers, tied round her waist with a

string, but no skirt like English girls.

She was very fond of her books, and soon learned to read a large number of the strange Chinese characters, which in the beginning were picture words. She also learned to sing hymns, such as 'Jesus loves me,' and 'There is a happy land.' The tunes were the same as those you sing, but the words sounded very different.

She was taught also to sew neatly, but best of all she learned in the school of how the Son of God came down into this world to die for sinners, and loved the girls as well as the boys in every land.

This seemed very wonderful to Ping-an, for she had always been taught that girls were of no worth at all, while boys were very precious indeed. When her father was asked how many children he had, he only replied by giving the number of boys, the girls were not considered worth counting.

When little Ping-an was about fourteen years of age, her parents said she must leave school and be taken to the house of the boy whom it had been arranged she should marry. Chinese people marry very early.

This home was a long way off in the country, and the poor child cried sadly, for she could not bear to be taken so far away from the kind friends who had taught her of the love of Jesus, and who had been so good to her.

But her teachers told her that there was one Friend who would never leave her; who would go with her to her new home, and to whom she could tell all her troubles. This Friend you will guess was the Lord Jesus Christ.

So Ping-an, remembering this, cheered up a little, and her school Bible and hymn-book were packed away with her new clothes in her queer little white pig-skin trunk.

When she reached her father-in-law's house in the country village, there were great rejoicings and feasting for several days. After this, she had to work very hard; for the family was a large one and all the roughest work was put upon the little new-comer.

Soon they found out she was a Christian, and then they were always saying unkind things about those who had 'turned foreigners,' as they called it, and entered the 'Jesus religion.'

When the little girl knelt down to pray they would throw shoes at her, and when she sang some of her school hymns they mocked and laughed at her.

So Ping-an's heart was often sad, but she told all her troubles to Jesus, and so was helped to bear them.

After a time, her mother-in-law and the wives of the other sons of the family began to say, 'Well, it is rather pleasant having a Christian for a sister-in-law. She does so much work without grumbling, and does not get angry or go into passions, whatever we say to her.'

The father-in-law also was struck by Ping-an's gentle ways.

Some months after, everyone in the village was talking about a strange looking man who had arrived. He did not wear a pig-tail, like other men, but had his hair cut short all over his head, and black cloth garments that fitted him closely, instead of the long, loose, blue cotton robes that Chinamen wear. The boys ran after him in crowds, and all the dogs rushed out of the houses and barked till they were tired. People said the strange man was an Englishman, a teacher of the Jesus religion.

Ping-an's father-in-law heard about the man, and he said, 'I am going to the inn where that foreigner is staying. I want to learn something about the Jesus religion which makes people like Ping-an, so easy to live with.'

So he went and saw the missionary, and had a long talk with him, and he bought a Bible and had a number of tracts given to him.

About a year afterwards, when the Englishman returned to this village, he found all this family wishing to enter the Church, saying they had given up idols and were now believers in Jesus. It was, they said, all owing to the little school-girl, Ping-an. Her dutiful ways and happy spirit first made them wish to hear more about the religion which kept her bright and cheerful in the midst of strangers, who had at first been so unkind to her.—'Child's Own Magazine.'

It is much easier to listen to the voice of God when He calls to what we desire. But if we listen truly it will be to hear what He will say to us whatever our desire may be.

The Little Substitute.

A teacher in a day-school had to punish one of his scholars for breaking the rule of the school. The punishment was that the offending boy should stand for a quarter of an hour in a corner of the school-room.

As the guilty boy was going to the appointed place, a little fellow, much younger than he, went up to the teacher, and requested that he might be allowed to take the place of the other boy. The teacher consented. The little boy went, and bore the punishment due to the other boy.

When the quarter of an hour was past, the teacher called the little boy to him, and asked if his companion had begged him to take his place. 'No, sir,' he replied.

'Well, don't you think that he deserved to be punished?'

'Yes, sir; he had broken the rule of the school, and he deserved to be punished.'

'Why, then, did you want to bear the punishment in his place?'

'Sir, it was because he is my friend, and I love him.'

The teacher thought this was a good opportunity for teaching his scholars an important lesson.

'Boys,' said he, 'would it be right for me now to punish that boy who has broken the rule of the school?'

'No, sir,' answered the boys.

'Why not?'

'Because we have allowed his friend Joseph to be punished in his place.'

'Does this remind you of anything?' asked the teacher.

'Yes, sir,' said several voices: 'it reminds us that the Lord Jesus bore the punishment of our sins.'

'What name would you give to Joseph for what he has done?'

'That of a substitute.'

'What is a substitute?'

'One who takes the place of another.'

'What place has the Lord Jesus Christ taken?'

'That of sinners.'

'Joseph has told us that he wished to take his friend's place, and be punished instead of him, because he loved him. Can you tell me why Jesus wished to die in the place of sinners?'

'It was because he loves us.'

'Repeat a passage from the Bible which proves this.'

'"The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."'—'Children's Treasury.'

A Single Glass and Its Dangers.

Millions of men who have not feared temptation have found it to be much too strong for them in the long run, and on their deathbeds cursed the hour when they took their first glass of wine. The very first glass is a glass too much. Man does not, in his natural state, need stimulants of any kind any more than the dog or the horse, but when he has once begun to use them, the havoc which they play with his system makes him regard them as necessaries of life. If it is no sin to do a thing which may have, and which, in myriads of cases, has had, the effect of destroying the souls and bodies of men and of ruining the happiness of whole families, then it may be true that it is not a sin to drink wine. Dr. Samuel Johnson said that he could practice abstinence but not temperance, and he, therefore, was a total abstainer, although his companions indulged freely in the use of liquor. Men who had formerly acquired the liquor habit have been known to abstain entirely for many years, and then, when persuaded to take a single glass of wine, have lost all self-control and died a drunkard's death. Mr. Fielden Thorp of York, England, in a paper read before the Fifth International Congress for the Prevention of the Abuse of Spirituous Liquors, held at Basle, Switzerland, in August, 1895, related the two following anecdotes, which bear upon this question:

A good many years ago, a young man who had yielded to the seductions of the society of drinking men, resolved to tear himself away from his danger by leaving the paternal mansion and taking the position of a clerk in a distant city. He thought that he could conquer his appetite if he did not have at the same time to resist the importunities and ridicule of his comrades. A short time after his arrival in the city of his adoption he was invited to dine with a gentleman who knew his family. He reflected a moment, and, knowing that this gentleman was a member of the temperance society, thought that he could accept without danger. However, on his arrival, he found that his hostess did not share her husband's views; she placed wine and beer on the table, begged him not to imitate her husband's abstinence, as she thought it too ascetic, and, at last, as he continued to decline, poured him out a glass of beer with her own hands. The poor young man, feeling that he could only resist by flight, rose from the table abruptly, muttering a few words of excuse, and left the house. He afterwards wrote a note of apology to the lady, explaining the reason of his conduct; and this induced the good woman to follow her husband's example and to sign the pledge of total abstinence, precisely on the Christian principle of which we have just been speaking. Would she not have reproached herself bitterly if the young visitor had had less firmness, and if, yielding to her solicitations, he had relapsed into drunkenness? And yet, she had not the slightest idea that he was in any danger.

A young lady in society had signed the pledge under the influence of an excellent pastor. Some time afterwards she applied to him to release her from her pledge and to accept her resignation. She declared that she did not care at all for the wine, but she found it extremely annoying to have to explain constantly why she drank none, and to be compelled to endure the ridicule of her acquaintances. 'And, besides,' she added, 'it does no good; no one refuses to drink on my account.' The worthy pastor entreated her to stand firm, assuring her that she could not estimate the effects of her example. One night, while she was in the midst of a numerous company, a gentleman approached her with the words: 'What wine may I have the honor to offer you?' 'Thank you,' she replied, 'I will take a glass of water.' Later in the evening, a young stranger said to her: 'Allow me to thank you from the bottom of my heart for what you have done for me.' In surprise, she asked him for an explanation, which he immediately gave her: 'You have saved me, soul and body, to-night; I have been a drinking man; I have been for a long time resisting the inclination, contending, at the same time, against the fatal appetite and the solicitations of my friends. The ordeal has been terrible; and I came here with the conviction that I must yield if I was asked to drink; that I could not refuse; but when I heard you say, "I will take a glass of water," I took courage; I gained strength to imitate you, and to say, "I will take a glass of water, too."'—'Union Signal.'

Bonnie Prince Charlie's Drinking-Cup.

'Ah!' said Harry Rogers's father as he laid down his newspaper one morning after breakfast. 'Now, there is a thing I must get. Prince Charlie's drinking-cup is to be sold this afternoon; I'll bid for it if it is not too dear.'

Mr. Rogers was a rich man. His house was filled with fine pictures and interesting and valuable curiosities, and in the drawing-room there stood a large carved oak cabinet, which he sometimes opened when Harry had a party of his school-friends. In the drawers and shelves of this cabinet Mr. Rogers had arranged many rare objects connected with Scottish history, which he had gathered together with great trouble and expense. There were flint arrow-heads and stone axes of long past ages, and coins which the old Romans must have lost when they were marching or fighting in this country, or perhaps when they were building the great wall which stretched between the Forth and the Clyde. There were cruel-looking thumb-screws, too, which had been used to torture the poor Covenanters; but the most precious thing of all was a little bit of the cloth of gold which was found wrapped round the body of the hero king of Scotland, Robert the Bruce, when his grave was discovered in Dumfermline Abbey.

So Harry and his father went off to the sale-room, and in due course the auctioneer held up the cup, which, after a brisk competition, was knocked down to Mr. Rogers for the sum of six pounds. It was made of wooden staves, held together by silver hoops, and on the rim there was engraved these words:—

'Tho' sma' I be, tak' care o' me.'

When they returned home, Mr. Rogers proudly showed his new purchase to the boys who had come to Afton Lodge to play tennis.

'My lads,' he said, 'it would have been a very good thing for Bonnie Prince Charlie if he had listened to the good advice of his drinking-cup. This motto should be on every wine and whiskey glass, for, believe me, boys, there is more mischief and danger lurking in the first glass of wine or beer than in the sting of a viper or in the bite of a mad dog.'—'Adviser.'

A Call to Arms.

At evening roll-call in the late war a captain said to his company:

'Soldiers, I am ordered to detail ten men for a very dangerous service, but of the greatest importance to the army in the coming battle. I have not the heart to pick the men, for the chances are against their ever coming back. But if there are ten men in the company who will volunteer for this service they may step two paces to the front.' As the captain ceased speaking the whole line stepped two paces forward, and stood there with every man in his place, the ranks even as before. The captain's eyes were dim, and his voice faltered, as he said: 'Soldiers, I thank you; I am proud to be captain of such a company.' Fellow-workers, just such spirit should move the whole Prohibition line. We wage a war fiercer than that of bullet and bayonet, and far more vital to human good. It is a struggle whose echoes reach the stars and enlist the hosts in heaven. Step to the front and give yourself, your powers, and your means to stay the enemy of God and man.—Frances E. Willard.

Speak to Him.

Run, speak to that young man! What young man? That young man with unsteady step and bleary eyes. He has got hold of the wrong end of life, and is in the highway that leads down to a drunkard's grave. Talk to him in a straightforward, manly way; he will listen. Tell him of his peril, and how sadly he is disappointing his sincerest friends. Show a personal interest in him, and win him from his evil course.

Run, speak to that young man! The young man that is wasting his money on the gaming-table. Gambling is the curse of the age. It enters every path of life. A prison chaplain once made the statement that the hardest criminal to convert was the gambler. The practice of gaming hardens the heart and blunts the sympathies. It destroys the man's capacity to feel for others. Many professional gamblers came from parlor card parties. Danger ever lurks in card-playing.—'Everybody's Magazine.'

A Helping Hand.

A cabman signed the pledge for the Rev. Charles Garrett, but soon after broke it. Conscience-stricken and ashamed, he tried to keep out of the way of his friend, but Mr. Garrett was not to be put off.

One day he found the poor, miserable man, and, taking hold of his hand, he said:

'John, when the road is slippery, and your cab horse falls down, what do you do with him?'

'I help him up again?' replied John.

'Well, I have come to do the same,' said Mr. Garrett, affectionately; 'the road was slippery, I know, John, and you fell, but there's my hand to help you up again.'

The cabman's heart was thrilled. He caught his friend's hand in a vice-like grip, and said:

'God bless you, sir! You'll never have cause to regret this. I'll never fall again.'

And to his day he has kept his word.—'Christian Advocate.'

There is a plan to celebrate the Band of Hope Jubilee and the Queen's sixty years' reign next year by a magnificent temperance demonstration at the Crystal Palace.

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

LESSON XII.—Dec. 20, 1896.

Matt. 2 : 1-12.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Commit to Memory Vs. 10, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.—Luke 2 : 10.

LESSON OUTLINE.

I. The Coming of the Wise Men. Vs. 1-6.
II. The Finding of the Place. Vs. 7-10.
III. The Worshipping of the Child. Vs. 11, 12.

HOME READINGS.

M. Luke 1 : 26-33.—The Announcement to Mary.
T. Luke 1 : 46-55.—Mary's Song.
W. Mic. 5 : 1-7.—The Birth in Bethlehem Foretold.
Th. Matt. 1 : 18-25.—Jesus to be the Saviour.
F. Luke 2 : 1-20.—The Birth of Jesus.
S. Luke 2 : 21-38.—The Infant Jesus in the Temple.
S. Matt. 2 : 1-12.—The Visit of the Wise Men.

Time.—B. C. 4, February. Place.—Bethlehem.

HINTS AND HELPS IN STUDY.

Prophecy had declared that the Messiah should be born in Bethlehem. Wednesday's Reading. Mary, who the angel Gabriel had said should be the mother of the Saviour, was living at Nazareth. A decree of the Roman emperor obliged her to go with Joseph, her betrothed husband, to Bethlehem to be enrolled. There Jesus was born, and thus the arbitrary decree of a heathen ruler brought about the fulfilment of prophecy. The crowded condition of the caravanserai, or inn, compelled Joseph and Mary to lodge in the stable. An angel announced the birth of the holy child, to shepherds near Bethlehem, and a chorus of angels sang praises to God. Friday's Reading. The shepherds hastened to search for the child and found him lying in a manger just as the angel said they should. The baby was circumcised on the eighth day, and named Jesus—'Saviour.' On the fortieth day he was presented in the temple at Jerusalem. Saturday's Reading. The holy family then returned to Bethlehem, where they lodged, though probably not in the stable but in some dwelling house. Here occurred the visit of the wise men.

QUESTIONS.

Who was the mother of Jesus? Where was Jesus born? How came Mary to be at Bethlehem? Who came to Jerusalem to visit the infant Jesus? What did they ask? How did Herod feel when he heard their question? What did Herod do? What did he ask? What answer was given him? Whither did he send the wise men? With what directions? What did the wise men do when they found Jesus? What warning did they receive? What did they do?

WHAT THE LESSON TEACHES.

1. In many ways God would lead us to Jesus.
2. The coming of Christ troubles wicked men.
3. We should be glad to find the way to Christ.
4. We should offer our heart's best gifts to Jesus.
5. Plots against God's anointed must always fail.

THE LESSON STORY.

A strange thing happened one day a long time ago in the city of Jerusalem. Some wise men came there looking for a baby King of the Jews. There was already a king named Herod, who ruled over the people, and he was a very wicked man. You can believe that it troubled him to hear that men from far away were looking for a new king. These wise men said that they had seen the star of the baby King in the east, and had come to worship him.

Herod sent for the priests who knew the Old Testament Scriptures to come and tell where Christ was to be born. They said that the prophet had foretold that he would be born in Bethlehem. Then Herod told the wise men to go there and find the new King and come back and tell him so he could worship him too. He meant so that he could go and kill him.

When the wise men started to go to Bethlehem the star went ahead of them and stopped over the stable where the young child lay. The wise men gave him presents of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, and worshipped him. But God told them in a dream not to go back and tell Herod, and so they went home by another way, and Herod was disappointed in his evil plans.

ILLUSTRATION.

Jesus' enemies. Herod was troubled, V. 3, the chief priests and scribes were indifferent, Vs. 4-6. They were both against him. Matt. 12 : 30. A man walked seven hundred miles to see Niagara. Coming within seven miles of the falls he heard what he thought might be the roar of the torrent, and asked a man walking by the roadside if it was so. The man said, 'Maybe, I don't know, I've never been there.' Within seven miles of the great scenery, and had never gone to look at it! These priests and scribes lived close to the infant but never went to see Him. Out of the Bible they told the traveller the way to Jesus, but not one step did they take themselves. One may be 'near to Christ in point of privilege, but a long way off in point of piety.'

Jesus' worshippers. They were 'Wise.' Vs. 2, 11. The greatest and wisest have owned their allegiance to him, through all the centuries. Jonathan Edwards, the learned metaphysician, was a Christian; Herschel, the great astronomer; Benjamin Franklin, the wise philosopher; John Milton, the wonderful poet; William Blackstone, the great law commentator; General Gordon, the brave warrior; David Livingstone, the self-denying explorer; Earl of Shaftesbury, the mighty statesman, were all worshippers of Jesus. If you would follow the example of the wisest and best men you must be among the worshippers of Jesus.

Satisfied. Where the star 'stood' they rested with 'exceeding great joy.' Vs. 9, 10. A little girl patiently listened to her mother as she told her the first chapters of the story of Ben Hur; how the wise men in the Arab desert saw the bright star in the sky and followed it. How they travelled, watching eagerly the wonderful light of the heavens which was to bring them to the Light of the world. When finally, after much description, the story teller brought the wise men to the manger, where with the star they stopped, the little girl drew a long breath and said, 'Oh! I'm so glad we've come to Jesus.' A sight of the Saviour brings fulness of joy. Jno. 15 : 11; joy unspeakable and full of glory. 1 Pet. 1 : 8.—'Arnold's Practical Commentary.'

True Love Sacrifices Self.

I.

'No, no; I wur a fool to hope or think sic a thing. There be anither man tha lovest; a younger man, a betther man nor me. It be Will Benson. Dunnot answer, lass, I know it. Well, forgi' me what a' said. Good-bye, Jessie, and God bless thee, lass; God bless thee!'

Thus spoke Steven Armstrong, as he turned away from the cottage where Jessie MacDavitt lived; that cottage with the gay flowers round its porch that made the one bright patch of brightness in this dismal, dust-begrimed country side, blackened everywhere by coal, saddened by the lives of men whom destiny had cast to delve and burrow beneath the fair earth that other men might grow rich.

But, somehow, to-day Steve Armstrong could see no brightness in anything. He had been a fool, and no mistake, this great, stalwart, broad-shouldered miner! He was well past forty; his hair becoming gray, and sparse on top—quite old to her.

He had been a bachelor all these years. He might have known it was sheer madness now to lavish all the wealth of his great manly heart on pretty, winsome Jessie. She did not want an old fogey like him.

At first she seemed to hear his tale with gentle tenderness and pity. Then a word or two she dropped almost unconsciously had revealed the truth. Of course, Will Benson was the man. Will was twenty years younger than himself, and was just the lad to please the girl's fancy.

And so, having settled that matter in his own mind, Armstrong walked slowly and sadly away about his business.

II.

It was Saturday night. Bar and parlor of the Miners' Arms were crowded with men. Here the hard-earned money flew merrily; money which should have gone to wife and weans at home—money which might have been as a tower of strength in fighting the battles that labor and poverty always have to fight.

Will Benson was there, in the midst of a noisy throng, reeking of beer, spirits, and rank tobacco. He had had a great deal too much to drink already. Suddenly some one laid a hand upon his arm. He turned tipsily, and encountered the serious, steadfast gaze of Steven Armstrong, who was not drunk, and had only just entered the public house.

'Dunnot tak' ony moor,' the latter whispered, gently, but firmly.

'Who told thee to interfere, Maister Preacher?'

'No one. I ask thee not to for t' sake o' t' girl who loves thee.'

'Did she tell thee to coom pryin' afther me?'

'Tha knows betther no that. I ask thee for her sake and for tha own good.'

'Bah! I've heard yond' stuff fro' t' blue ribbon fowk afore now.'

A' be none o' them. I ask thee not t' spend all t' neet here. Think o' her who'st o' be tha wife. These chaps do thee no good. They'll mak' thee spend tha brass, and when 'tis all gone they'll only laugh at thee.'

'Shew me t' mon as 'll laugh at me. Ye daren't. It's tha thyself as are doin' it. Come outside, then, and we'll see who's t' best mon.'

'I winna fight wi' thee—and certainly not now,' Armstrong answered slowly and with dignity. It was not the retraction of a coward. His well-meant remonstrances had proved worse than useless, and from that time those two men felt each other to be rivals.

III.

Horror and consternation are spreading far and wide through the grimy Lancashire town. A terrible explosion has just been heard. They know only too well what that means, and the poor women, both young and old, are rushing wild and terror-stricken to the pit's mouth.

Down in the 'workings' the excitement is at its height. Men are running to the bottom of the shaft—running for their lives, for the noxious after-damp is choking them, and they know only too well that many of them are destined never to see the light of day again. The cage is going up and down again as quickly as may be, but it will only hold a limited number. They must patiently wait their turn, and that turn may mean life or death.

'There be room for one moor,' the miners shout. 'Come along, Steve Armstrong; it be tha turn.'

But he does not move.

'No,' he answers; 'I be old a' alone. Here's a young fellow as a gotten a mither; let un go instead this time.'

It was Will Benson who stood by his side.

'You, Armstrong! You mak' room for me!' he exclaimed.

'What dost suppose a'd do? A' fight fair—when a' want to fight.'

'Yo do this for ma sake?'

'Not for thine, mon; for hers! Go!'

The words were few—there was no time for more—but they had a rough, heroic dignity about them. Benson stepped into the cage without another word; the signal was given, and they went up toward the light and air above.

From those about the pit's mouth a ringing cheer arose as the cage reached the surface. They knew that so many, at least, of their mates were safe, and some of the women went away with hearts full of joy and thankfulness. The word went quickly around that Steve Armstrong had sent up Will Benson instead of himself. Pretty Jessie MacDavitt was there. When she heard the whisper she understood. A woman's in-

stinct is much the same after all, whether she be a princess or only a rough miner's lass. Benson came toward her, but she seemed hardly to notice him. She was waiting for some one else.

The cage was let down again. Some anxious minutes followed that seemed like hours. Once more it appeared with its load of men. Jessie pressed eagerly forward. Great heavens! he whom she sought was not there! Several voices asked after him—Jessie dared not trust herself to do so—and then came the appalling answer:

'Choke-damp ha' taken him, and bit wall fallen in ower him!'

Suddenly a woman's voice rang out—Jessie MacDavitt's:

'Then he be i' danger—dying—dead mayhap! He gave his life for one o' ye. Aren't ye men? Are none o' ye goin' to save un? Then I wull!'

She pressed forward toward the pit, but a dozen strong arms restrained her, and one old fellow said:

'Keep back, lass! It'll be death to go down there for nigh an hour yet. This be no place for women fowk.'

She heeded not, and, breaking away from them, entered the cage. Two or three men followed her, ashamed to think that a girl should be braver than they; and down they went, from the light into the darkness; down among the noxious, deadly gases—down to the unknown!

A long, long time now elapsed, or so it seemed to the anxious watchers. Two or three cages full of miners came up, but they were not among them. Great heavens! was it possible that all had perished in the heroic attempt.

The news that Jessie had gone below reached her mother; and Mrs. MacDavitt—with her sleeves tucked up, fresh from the wash tub, her cheeks pale as death, her eyes streaming—rushed madly to the spot.

Even at that moment the cage was coming up again. A deafening cheer rang out, loud and long, upon the murky air. It was they—they at last, thank God! But, were they alive? Two inanimate forms were lying down upon the black, dusty bank—the forms of Jessie MacDavitt and Steven Armstrong.

IV.

Jessie MacDavitt sat alone, at work, in the little front parlor of her mother's cottage. She was quite well again now, but her recovery from the effects of her adventure in the mine had been slow and painful.

There was a knock at the door. She called out: 'Coom in!' in sweet, cheery tones. It was Steven Armstrong who entered the apartment. She looked up, surprised; and colored up to her very brow as she rose to greet him. She had not seen him since that fearful day; perhaps this was the reason of her confusion. He did not wear his working, nor yet his 'shiftin'' clothes, but was habited in a tweed suit and wide awake. How brave and noble he looked, albeit a trifle pale just now!

'Mr. Armstrong!' she said, 'I am so glad to see you fettle again. I haven't seen you since—'

'Not since then—no; it wur churlish o' me not to coom an' thank thee—only—only there be nae thanks possible for sic things as that. Oh, Jessie, why didst do it; why didst risk tha life?'

'Because you gave your chance o' life to him,' she answered simply, but with an unsteady tremor in her voice.

'Now I ha' coom to bid thee good-bye,' Armstrong said, like a man who has an unpleasant duty to perform and wants to get it over quickly. 'A' be goin' away.'

'Goin' away!' she echoed. 'Wheer to?'

'Reet away—forivver. To America or Australy—A' hardly know where yet. A' be tired o' t' life here. But remember, if there be ivver onything I con do for thee a' wull. Tha shalt know where I go to, and if tha should ivver want a friend or a helpin' hand, a'll come to thee if 'twere half across t' world. If a' han't said mooch remember a' know that a' can nivver hope to pay ma' debt to thee.'

'Oh, dunnot talk like that; please dunnot talk about it—I—I—hadn't an idea you were thinkin' o' goin' away—it's—ye've took me so sudden like—I—dunnot know what to say.'

'Say, Jess, ma lass. Just say "Good-bye, and God bless thee, Steve Armstrong," or soom sic words as a'll be able to tak' wi' me an' cherish i' memory o' thee when a' be far away.'

'I'll say "God bless thee, Steve Armstrong," wi' all ma heart, but not "good-bye,"' Jessie said, in a voice that was even more unsteady with emotion than before.

'Ah, dunnot, it mun be, I say—tha would not torture me?'

'Wouldn't tha stay, Steve, if a' were to ask ye?'

'There's naething I wouldna do that you bid me—excep' that—excep' that, why, a' be goin' away fro' thee.'

'Fro' me?'

'Surely, a' needna tell thee all ower again. A' wish thee an' tha husband well wi' all ma heart—but I canna stay.'

'Ye said just now ye'd do anything for me,' Jessie answered, clasping her hands, and the bright color mantled in her cheek hotter and redder than ever—such a coy, pretty blush! They were hard words for a girl to speak; but she had made up her mind all at once, and felt impelled to go on. 'Ye said ye nivver could hope to repay yer debt to me. Suppose I show ye t' way? Stay here for ma' sake, an'—dunnot ye understand? Dunnot mak' me have to say ony moor—'

'What madness is this? And t' mon tha'rt plighted to—?'

'We are na plighted now. He begone reet away. Heven't ye heerd?'

'No; I hav na been mooch among t' chaps o' late.'

'It was a small thing that parted us; somethin' I asked un to give up for ma sake—only t' drink. But he said no; no wench should ivver mak' a milk sop o' him. Then a' cam' to compare ye both togither; he, who wouldn't even do that mooch; you, who would ha' given yer very life for ma' sake. A' think t' were at t' pit mouth t' thought first cam' to me. A' weighed both i' scales, and then a' knew which way my heart had gone!'

And that was where she nestled now her pretty head; to that brave heart which was to be her home always.—'St. Paul's.'

A Vegetarian Devotee.

A Chinese woman had been for seventeen years a devout vegetarian, and had accumulated, as everybody considered, a large amount of merit through her unwearied devotions by day and night. Left a young widow years before, she had determined, as an act of special virtue, never to marry again, but to abandon herself to the life of a Buddhist devotee, with the resolute purpose to leave nothing undone that might secure happiness in, or at any rate alleviate the sufferings, of the future state. She had a private chapel full of idols, to which many women of her acquaintance came. With them often, or alone, she would spend long nights in the wearisome and dreary round of her devotions. She was one of those whom the missionary loves to meet—souls led by the Spirit of God, and sincerely seeking the heavenward way. Upon such the Light of Life cannot fail to shine. In her case the change was decided and complete when she grasped the precious truths of the Gospel. Her idols, beads and other idolatrous possessions she brought to the missionaries, and, by eating an egg, broke her religious abstinence of seventeen years, cutting all connection with her old manner of life. Severe persecution and bitter reproach came upon her, but the dear old lady kept firm in spite of all, and ultimately was baptized and received into the rapidly growing church.—'China's Millions.'

Plebiscite Campaign.

The 'War Notes,' of which a copy was closed in a recent issue of the 'Messenger' and whose purpose was fully explained in its columns, has not yet begun to be published as we are waiting for a sufficient number of applications to indicate that at least ten thousand will be needed, for otherwise its publication would be at a serious loss to us.

It is designed for broadcast distribution, as this was found to be the most effective way of working at the time of the Scott Act campaigns. Its leading features will be a cartoon on the front page, notes from correspondents on the progress of the campaign in their district, and a collection of the very strongest kind of temperance literature. If you are individually, or in connection with any society or church, going to take an active part in the campaign, would you kindly let us know as soon as possible how many copies you will be likely to want weekly.

'Messenger' Armenian Fund.

The following sums have been received for the Armenian fund:—Donore Primary School class, $1; Toll Gate Sunday-school, Cornwall, $2.25; Widow's mite from Woodside, Que., $1; Priceville, Ont., Y. P. S. C. E., $2.50; E. W., Fredericton, P.E.I., $1; N. H. and J. H., $1; South Luther Presbyterian Sunday-school, $1.10; One Who Longs to Help, $20; A Sister in Christ, $1.00; Mr. John Durrant, Dundas Baptist Church, $1.00; From a patch of potatoes planted for the purpose by Constance, $3.35.

Northern Messenger.

The following letter from one of our subscribers contains a good Christmas suggestion:—

'Dear Sir,—I have taken the 'Northern Messenger' for a long time, and think it a valuable paper, especially for the young. I am very much pleased with the change you have made, so much so that I have decided to take it for my two grandsons as well as renew my own subscription.'

It would be hard to find anything to give a friend or relation which would be more valuable or give more pleasure than a year's subscription for the 'Northern Messenger.' If you send it to two friends you get the two subscriptions with your own renewal for twenty-five cents each.

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Ten or more subscriptions to the same address, 20c each.

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PROMOTION MANAGER, 'Witness' Office, Montreal.

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All business communications should be addressed 'John Dougall & Son,' and all letters to the Editor should be addressed Editor of the 'Northern Messenger.'